

RESPECT FOR
YESTERDAY,
SUPPORT FOR
TODAY,
PLAN FOR
TOMORROW



Aging Matters

Dec. 2023 Newsletter from the Illinois Department on Aging

Office of
Governor JB
Pritzker

Message From Director Paula Basta



News and
Events

As I begin to pack up my offices in Springfield and Chicago, I can't help but feel a wide range of emotions. Effective Dec. 31, I will be retiring from my role as Director of the Illinois Department on Aging and ending my 40-plus-year career in this field.

Illinois' State
Plan on Aging

It has been the honor of my lifetime to serve and advocate for older adults as head of our State Unit on Aging. I am most proud of being one of - if not *the* - most well-traveled IDoA directors of all time.

Find Services
in Your Area

Since March 2019, I have driven more than 55,000 miles on state business and attended more than 350 in-person and virtual events. This job has brought me to every corner of the state and introduced me to the most kind and welcoming people. It's conversations with many of you that are informing how the state supports our network of aging services providers, older adults, and their caregivers, now and into the future.

Senior
Illinoisans Hall
of Fame

If an older adult in your life could benefit from a little extra support, I invite you to learn more about IDoA's programs and services [here](#). For specific questions about eligibility and access, contact the Senior HelpLine toll-free at 1-800-252-8966, 711 (TRS), or via email at aging.ilsenior@illinois.gov. Please note that the Senior HelpLine will be closed on Christmas Day and will reopen Tuesday, Dec. 26 at 8:30 a.m.

License Plate
Discount

Wishing you peace and joy this holiday season.

Sincerely,



Dementia Friendly Decatur Receives State Award

"It's all about making sure that Decatur is a welcoming and supportive and safe community for people experiencing dementia," East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging Executive Director Susan Real told a crowd of community leaders gathered at Decatur's Beach House Restaurant on Tuesday, Nov. 28.

Real was setting the stage for IDoA Director Paula Basta to present a 2023 Governor's Engaging Aging Award to the Dementia Friendly Decatur program, which has conducted approximately 200 dementia-friendly training sessions to date for businesses, first responders, and community members of all ages to more effectively communicate with people living with dementia.



During the award ceremony, Director Basta also recognized 2023 Senior Illinoisans Hall of Fame inductee Shirley Paceley, a Decatur resident with nearly 50 years of experience working with people with disabilities.

Pictured, from left to right: East Central Illinois Area Agency on Aging Executive Director Susan Real, state Rep. Dan Caulkins, Dementia Friendly Decatur coordinator Linda Little, IDoA Director Paula Basta, and Senior Illinoisans Hall of Fame inductee Shirley Paceley.

[Read more from the Herald & Review](#)

Decatur is one of [31 communities](#) in Illinois to be formally designated as dementia-friendly by Dementia Friendly America. [Rockford](#), [Washington](#), and [Geneseo](#) are some of the most recent communities to make the list.

Third Senior Only Walk-In DMV Center Opens in Chicago Suburbs

SENIORS ONLY DMV CENTERS

WALK-IN

Monday through Friday | 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Offering Driver and Motor Vehicle Services (Including driving tests)

**Evanston
Civic Center**

2100 N. Ridge Ave.
Evanston, IL

**Seat Geek
Stadium**

7000 S. Harlem Ave.
Bridgeview, IL

**Westchester
Village Hall**

10300 W. Roosevelt Rd.
Westchester, IL

For more info or help with online renewals,
Seniors may call **800-252-8980** and **press 2**

SECRETARY *of* STATE



ALEXI GIANNOULIAS

A new "Senior Only" walk-in DMV is now open in Westchester, joining two similar facilities that opened in Evanston and Bridgeview in September. Intended to serve drivers aged 70 and older, the Senior Only DMV centers are open weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. and offer REAL IDs, driver's licenses and state identification cards; vehicle registration stickers; organ and tissue donor registration; voter registration; and in-car driving tests.

Secretary of State Alexi Giannoulias also recently announced the opening of a [road testing center in Addison](#), located at 50 E. Oak St. Driver's licenses will be issued as part of the road tests. Vehicle registration stickers and temporary disability placard cards are also offered at the Addison facility.

These new pop-up DMVs are part of Giannoulias' effort to improve the [Skip-the-Line program](#) and eliminate long lines at DMVs.

It's possible that a change to state law could soon play a role in reducing long lines at DMVs as well, as state Rep. Joyce Mason, D-Gurnee, recently [told the Daily Herald](#) that she plans to introduce legislation eliminating mandatory road tests for older adults. Currently, drivers aged 79 and 80 must pass a road test if their four-year license renewal is up. For drivers aged 81 to 86, the test is required every two years, and for those 87 and older, it's yearly.

[Read the Daily Herald article](#)

Beware of Grinches Looking to Steal Your Personal Information

As the holidays draw near (and the temperatures drop), the ease and convenience of online shopping can be tempting. But this convenience comes with some risks. From the National Council on Aging, learn [10 tips](#) for enjoying a safe and secure online shopping experience this season:

- Always use a trusted online shopping “store” for your purchases and beware of phony online shopping sites that often reside on social media sites that may offer enticing prices.
- Protect your privacy and security.
- Be aware of fake reviews of products you’re considering for purchase.
- Shop smart to avoid counterfeit items.
- Watch out for online scams, such as “phishing,” that target older adults.
- Bargain hunters, beware: if it seems too good to be true, it probably is!
- Make sure you are on a secure site when entering financial information during your purchase transactions.
- Use a credit card for your purchases.
- Watch out for [“impersonation scams”](#) that could attempt to gather your personal identification or financial information by posing as one of your trusted online retailers.
- Report any scams or fraud that you experience online.

VIDEO: Illinois Comptroller Susana Mendoza Offers Holiday Shopping Tips

The Holidays Are Here!



The holidays are here! We've rounded up some tips and resources to make your days merry and bright, no matter how you're experiencing the season.

If you're making a list and checking it twice: Find the perfect gift for anyone on your holiday shopping list when you shop at [Christmas markets in Illinois](#), offering one-of-a-kind items in all shapes and sizes. Want to make your own edible holiday gifts? Try [these recipes](#) for salted bourbon caramel sauce, biscotti, and snack mix, courtesy of the Illinois Times.

Caregiving Magazine also [has some suggestions](#) for gifts for people with Alzheimer's and dementia.

If you're looking to make holiday memories at a light show: Various communities across Illinois are closing out the year with illuminating installations. Find a roundup of some of the state's top events in every region [here](#).

If you're traveling this holiday season: Planning ahead and having a back-up plan can help you dodge common travel hazards and pitfalls. Follow [these tips from the National Council on Aging](#) to help everything go as smoothly as possible. If you're traveling by car, we recommend these [winter driving tips](#) from the Illinois Department of Transportation.

If you're navigating grief during the holidays: There isn't a "right" way to grieve or to experience grief around the holidays, but if you are experiencing challenges, [these 7 tips from the National Council on Aging](#) might bring support and comfort, leading to a more manageable or healthy holiday experience.

Are You Up to Date on Your Vaccines?



The advertisement features a dark blue background on the left with the logos for 'all illinois' and 'IDoA Illinois Department on Aging'. A list of activities is shown in light blue text: 'Holiday parties', 'Family dinners', 'Date night', 'Fishing trips', 'Book club', and 'Game days'. The text 'Long Live Illinois' is prominently displayed in white. On the right, a photograph shows a smiling woman with white hair and glasses, wearing a light green sleeveless top. A circular 'Long Live Illinois' vaccine sticker is visible on her left shoulder.

Share love, not the bug, this holiday season. Keep yourself and your loved ones protected from respiratory viruses by getting up to date with your [COVID-19](#) and [annual flu](#) vaccines. If you are 60 or older, experts also advise talking to your doctor or a pharmacist about whether the RSV vaccine is right for you.

ICYMI: Every home in the U.S. became eligible to order an additional 4 free at-home COVID tests beginning Nov. 20. If you did not order tests this fall, you may place two orders for a total of 8 tests.

[Order free at-home tests](#)

Employment Opportunities

Assistant to the General Counsel

Work Location: Springfield

Salary: \$5,633 - \$8,140 monthly

Application Deadline: Dec. 19, 2023

Job Responsibilities:

- Performs as a confidential assistant to the General Counsel.
- Responds to Subpoenas and Authorizations for Release of Information inquiries, preliminary discovery, appeals, and hearings.
- Performs independent activities to assist in the meeting of timeframes related to the activities of the Office of the General Counsel, including Departmental rulemaking, Civil Rights Complaints, Freedom of Information Act requests, appeals, and contract actions.
- Confers with and acts as liaison with other government office representatives, businesses, and the public.
- Handles all administrative functions of the Office of the General Counsel, including the receipt, screening, and routing of mail and email, requests for information, meetings, etc.
- Performs other duties, as required, or assigned, which are reasonably within the scope of the duties enumerated above.

[Apply here](#)

Events Recap

ElderCARE Lake County Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The volunteer-driven ElderCARE organization serves adults aged 65+ who are homebound, with health challenges, who have limited financial resources. ElderCARE relies on volunteers to provide three core services to older adults:

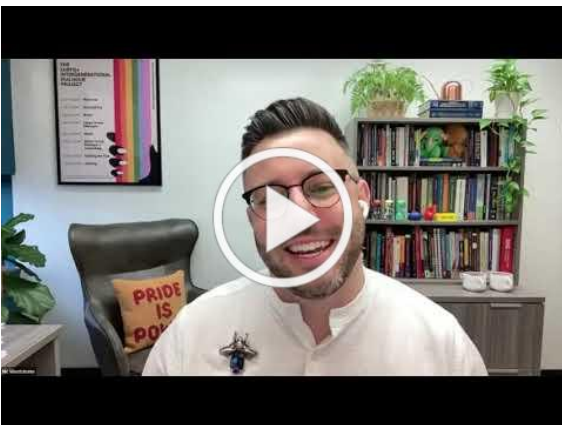
- Friendly visits/phone calls
- Grocery shopping
- Escorted transportation to medical appointments

Services are free to persons needing assistance, though care receivers must pay a one-time \$10 application fee. There is a suggested donation for escorted transportation trips. Learn more [here](#).



Pictured: IDoA Director Paula Basta (left) and ElderCARE Lake County Executive Director Jackie Lynn (right) at the ElderCARE organization's 25th anniversary luncheon on Nov. 30.

4th Annual State Legislative Forum on LGBTQ+ and HIV/AIDS Aging Issues



Illinois' 4th Annual State Legislative Forum on LGBTQ+ and HIV/AIDS Aging Issues took place on Wednesday, Dec. 6. This event featured vivid storytelling, an interview with outgoing IDoA Director Paula Basta, and panelists from AARP Illinois, the Area Agency on Aging for Lincolnland, AgeOptions, SAGE, and more.

Watch the recording [here](#).

Upcoming Events

IDoA will resume adding to our [events calendar](#) in January. We encourage you to enjoy time with loved ones this holiday season.

Items of Interest

[Chicago's seniors get into the holiday spirit at the Cultural Center](#)

[Pritzker joins Gold Star Families for tree lighting ceremony to honor loved ones lost](#)

[Pritzker lights menorah in Springfield, calls for Illinoisans to defy hate](#)

[Weight lifting at older ages builds muscle and mobility](#)

[Super Aging](#)

The Illinois Department on Aging does not discriminate in admission to programs or treatment of employment in programs or activities in compliance with appropriate State and Federal statutes. If you feel you have been discriminated against, call the **Senior HelpLine at (800) 252-8966; (888) 206-1327 (TTY)**



[Visit our website](#)